

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application.

Listing of Claims:

Claims 1-67 (Canceled).

68. (currently amended) A method comprising:

transmitting a plurality of video programs ~~together~~ to a plurality of consumer locations for automatic storage at the consumer locations without consumer selection or using individual consumer preference information ~~in response to video program pre-selections made by said consumer locations;~~ and

billing a consumer location within the plurality of consumer locations once ~~a~~ an automatically stored video program from the plurality of transmitted video programs that has been pre-selected and then pre-recorded at the consumer location has been selected for viewing.

69. (previously presented) The method of claim 68, further comprising:

encoding the transmitted video programs with data permitting playback only on a playback device with compatible decoder.

70. (previously presented) The method of claim 68 further comprising:

encoding the transmitted video programs with time-based code keys A.

71. (currently amended) The method of claim 70 wherein the time-based code keys

A encoded into the transmitted video programs are correlated with periodic time-based ~~key-codes~~ code keys B that are blanket transmitted to the plurality of consumer locations and time-based ~~codes~~ code keys C that are provided to consumer locations within the plurality of consumer locations that are in good standing, wherein a customer can only view a video program if all three ~~codes~~ code keys A, B and C have been received.

72. (currently amended) The method of claim 71 further comprising:

communicating video program playback information from each consumer location to a central controller system when the time-based ~~codes~~ code keys C are provided.

73. (previously presented) The method of claim 68 wherein the act of transmitting a plurality of video programs is carried out by direct broadcast satellite transmission on multiple channels in compressed-time format.

74. (previously presented) A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon for performing the method of claim 68.

75. (previously presented) A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon for performing the method of claim 69.

76. (previously presented) A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon for performing the method of claim 70.

77. (previously presented) A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon for performing the method of claim 71.

78. (previously presented) A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon for performing the method of claim 72.

79. (previously presented) A computer readable medium having computer-executable instructions stored thereon for performing the method of claim 73.

80. (currently amended) A device comprising:
a receiving mechanism configured to receive a plurality of ~~pre-selected~~ video programs transmitted together for automatic storage at a consumer location without consumer selection or using individual consumer preference information;
~~an identification mechanism configured to identify video programs within the plurality of transmitted video programs received by the receiving mechanism as those previously selected by a particular consumer location associated with the video recording device; and~~
a recording mechanism configured to record said ~~previously selected~~ video programs automatically at a consumer location without consumer selection or using individual consumer preference information ~~once identified by the identification mechanism.~~

81. (currently amended) The device of claim 80 further comprising:

a playback mechanism configured to playback recorded ~~previously-selected~~ video programs upon selection for playback by a user; and

a billing mechanism in communication with the playback mechanism configured to transmit billing information to a central billing system accounting for each time an automatically recorded ~~the previously-selected~~ video program has been selected for playback.

82. (previously presented) The device of claim 81 further comprising:

a control mechanism in communication with the receiving mechanism configured to verify a received combination of time-based code keys for authorizing play-back of said transmitted video programs at a desired time, and enabling said playback.

83. (currently amended) The device of claim 82 further comprising:

a decoding mechanism in communication with the control mechanism configured to decode transmitted video programs wherein time-based code keys A that are encoded into the transmitted video programs are correlated with periodic time-based ~~key-codes~~ code keys B that are blanket transmitted to a plurality of consumer locations and time-based ~~codes~~ code keys C that are provided to consumer locations within the plurality of consumer locations that are in good standing such that a consumer can only view a video program if all three ~~codes~~ code keys A, B and C have been received by the playback device.

84. (currently amended) The device of claim 83 wherein the billing mechanism comprises:

a mechanism configured to communicate an identity of said ~~previously-selected~~ video program and a unique identifying address associated with said consumer to said central billing system upon initiating play-back of the ~~previously-selected~~ video program; and

a playback-enabling mechanism configured to receive from said central billing system the third time-based code key for identifying a status of said consumer to enable said play-back of said ~~previously-selected~~ video program.

85. (new) A system comprising:
a mechanism configured to transmit a plurality of video programs to a plurality of consumer locations for automatic storage at the consumer locations without consumer selection or using individual consumer preference information; and
a billing mechanism configured to bill a consumer location within the plurality of consumer locations once an automatically stored video program from the plurality of transmitted video programs has been selected for viewing.
86. (new) The system of claim 85, further comprising:
an encoder configured to encode the transmitted video programs with data permitting playback only on a playback device with compatible decoder.
87. (new) The system of claim 85 further comprising:
an encoder configured to encode the transmitted video programs with time-based code keys A.
88. (new) The system of claim 87 wherein the time-based code keys A encoded into the transmitted video programs are correlated with periodic time-based code keys B that are blanket transmitted to the plurality of consumer locations and time-based code keys C that are provided to consumer locations within the plurality of consumer locations that are in good standing, wherein a customer can only view a video program if all three code keys A, B and C have been received.
89. (new) The system of claim 88 further comprising:
a mechanism configured to communicate video program playback information from each consumer location to a central controller system when the time-based code keys C are provided.
90. (new) The system of claim 85 wherein the mechanism configured to transmit a plurality of video programs is configured to transmit by direct broadcast satellite transmission on multiple channels in compressed-time format.